California GARDEN

SINCE 1909 FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1966 VOL 57 NO.

AZALEAS WILD FLOWERS CAMELLIAS

PLANTS I KNEW IN JAPAN

FLORAL EVENTS

FEBRUARY-MARCH, 1966

SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION PROGRAMS

Third Tuesday, 8 p.m. Floral Building, Balboa Park

Chairman — Mrs. Edward Penprase

Regular Meeting, February 15, 8 p.m.

J. N. Giridlian of Oakhurst Gardens, Arcadia, will bring us up-to-date on several recent developments in the plant world. He will talk on the bristlecone pines thought to be the oldest living plants—practically living fossils stunted to remain alive. Irises that you seldom see, and something on his experiences collecting bromeliads in Central America, Brazil and Mexico will be discussed. He plans to bring specimen plants and also slides.

Regular Meeting, March 15, 8 p.m.

Coming from the Los Angeles area, Maria Wilkes, Consulting Horticulturalist, will talk on "Herbs for fun and profit." Also she has worked with many of the famous early nurserymen of the Los Angeles area, and she always has growing hints to pass on.

FLOWER ARRANGEMENT CLASSES AT THE FLORAL BUILDING, BALBOA PARK

For information, call Mrs. Roland Hoyt, Chairman, 296-2757

1. **Creative Arts Group,** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Call Mrs. Hoyt for time of meeting.
2. **Flower Arrangement Demonstration** Class, 9:30 a.m.
   Last Monday of each month. Instructor: Mrs. J. R. Kirkpatrick

GARDEN TOURS FOR MEMBERS

Sunday, March 13, 2-5 p.m.

Wild flower Garden of Chief Warrant Officer and Mrs. Paul Witham, 5175 Sixty-eighth. It is at the north end of 68th St., 3 blocks north of El Cajon Boulevard. From Highway 80, turn south at 70th Street, and up the hill to Saranac, right to 68th St. A canyon slope has been utilized to recreate the native habitat for as many wild flowers as can be salvaged before the bulldozers move in. Mrs. Witham is constantly adding to her collection by seed and by gift.

FLOWER SHOWS

FEBRUARY

12-13	CAMELLIA SHOW Sat. 2-10 Sun. 10-6	CONFERENCE BLDG., BALBOA PARK San Diego Camellia Society
26-27	LA CANADA CAMELLIA SHOW Sat. 1-6 Sun. 10-6	DESCANSO GARDENS, La Canada Los Angeles Camellia Council

MARCH

2- 6	HOUSE AND GARDEN SHOW	EXHIBIT & CONVENTION HALL Community Concourse S. D. Builders & Contractors Assn.
10-20	NATIONAL ORANGE SHOW FLOWER SHOW	SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
25-27	ORCHID SHOW Theme: "Orchids International" Fri. 7-10 Sat. 10-9 Sun. 10-5:30	CONFERENCE BLDG. BALBOA PARK San Diego County Orchid Society

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Among Our Contributors

Ralph Ameele, President of the Orchid Society, began growing orchids in Rochester, New York long before coming to California. He specializes in Cymbidiums and Cypripediums, and has been growing them for over 15 years.

Ray Greer, President of the Camellia Society has been growing camellias ever since a friend took him to a Los Angeles Camellia Show and he fell in love with their beauty. As a contractor, he is less busy with his business at the time of their highest bloom—wintertime and he can take the time to appreciate and care for them.

Eleanor McCown lives on a large ranch in the Imperial Valley, near Holtville, where they raise carrots by irrigation. Besides caring for her family, she is well-known as a breeder and raiser of Spuria Iris. Wild flowers have been a hobby of hers for a long time, and she is fortunate to live in an area where they are still plentiful enough for her to enjoy her enthusiasm.

Isamu Kawaguchi is an Art major at San Diego State College specializing in Ceramics. He is sponsored as a student by the U.S. citizen who was his English teacher in Japan. He is well known throughout San Diego County as a graduate Flower Arranger. Almost all of the Flower Shows feature his arrangements.

John Farleigh has been interested in roses ever since he was stationed in Columbus, Ohio, the home of the American Rose Society. Since his retirement from the Navy, he has lived in San Diego where he grows and cares for a rose garden of about 85 plants. He is an active member of the local Rose Society.

Dr. Dara Emery is Horticulturist at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Santa Barbara, California.

Mrs. Henry Lippitt, author of *I Married a New Englander, Come into the Garden* and various columns, including the humorous Henry Letters in earlier issues of CALIFORNIA GARDEN, is back with a group of nature vignettes. Watch for more.

CALIFORNIA GARDEN

February - March, 1966

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THE COVER

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"The Wonderful World of Orchids"

FIFTH WORLD ORCHID CONFERENCE

by Ralph Ameele

The largest and most spectacular display of orchids ever presented will be the feature attraction of the Fifth World Orchid Conference, which will be held in the 50,000 square feet Long Beach Arena April 13 to 22, 1966. The show will be open to the public on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 14, 15, and 16 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and on Sunday, April 17th from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Orchid Society of Southern California is the local host for the Conference which is jointly sponsored by the American Orchid Society and the Royal Horticultural Society of England. Previous World Orchid Conferences have been held in St. Louis in 1954, in Honolulu in 1957, in London in 1960 and in Singapore in 1963.

The finest orchid flowers in the world will be entered in the competitive judging for the special gold, silver, and bronze medals plus the trophies and ribbons that will be awarded. The principal attraction will be 40 landscaped garden type exhibits featuring orchids of every description with a background of tropical planting.

In addition to the garden type exhibits, there will be numerous educational and commercial exhibits and demonstrations to acquaint visitors with the latest techniques and products available to the orchid grower, arranged by amateurs and commercial exhibitors and orchid societies, based on the show theme "The Wonderful World of Orchids." The San Diego County Orchid Society will be one of the exhibitors with a display of about 200 feet in size.

The American Orchid Society Bulletin for October 1965 states the aims and purposes of the conferences: "The World Orchid Conference is an idea not an organization. Its basic premise is that all people who are interested in orchids—whether they are hobbyists, botanists, commercial growers, or florists—and regardless of nationality or geographic location—have interests, purposes and problems in common. Its chief function is to bring together every few years as many orchid people as possible from all parts of the world in the belief that through personal contacts and friendships gained, the channels of world-wide communication can be extended, and the flow of information increased and the bonds of fellowship strengthened throughout the orchid world. Thus through the combination of shows and exhibits, talks and demonstrations, and above all, personal exchanges during the numerous social activities, the aims of the Conferences have been achieved on a truly global scale."

Many prominent speakers will present more than 40 papers by outstanding orchid growers and orchid authorities representing many countries. The educational and scientific value will be unsurpassed. These meetings will begin on Friday, April 15 in the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium Concert Hall adjoining the Arena and continue to April 19. There will be numerous social events for the delegates from all parts of the world plus opportunities for them to visit orchid growers and various points of interest throughout Southern California.

Invitations are cordially extended to all CALIFORNIA GARDEN readers to attend both the local show (See p. 2, this issue) and the international one. Here is an opportunity to see locally the very best that the entire world has to offer in the colorful and fascinating field of orchids.

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San Diego Botanical Garden Foundation

COUNCIL approval of a future San Diego Botanical Garden on a site in Balboa Park as presented in the Bartholomew Plan, really gets the ball rolling. The long-hoped-for Garden Center will be built on the site of the present Food and Beverage Building on the northwest corner of Zoo Drive and El Prado, adjacent to the present Botanical Building.

The San Diego Botanical Garden Foundation, Inc. is a new non-profit organization to assemble public support for the construction and operation of the Garden Center. It was incorporated July 23, 1965 in order to legally acquire by gift, bequest or other monies and property to enable it to perform the purposes of the organization.

A committee of three members from the Foundation Board of Trustees, made a formal appearance at the meeting of the City Council on Thursday, January 20, at ten o'clock to make notification to the Mayor and City Council of the foundation's organization and purpose. These were Samuel W. Hamill, Chairman, Stanley Miller and Larry Sisk.

The Purpose of the Foundation is stated:

To erect and maintain a garden center building in Balboa Park, to encourage and stimulate interest in ornamental and decorative horticulture and to encourage and develop and conduct research in various horticultural subjects through cooperation with educational institutions and through publication of literature and periodicals.

To develop and establish a horticultural center for Southern California, to encourage more extensive floriculture and use of landscape design using ornamental plants and trees.

To acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise monies and property to perform purposes of the organization.

A million dollar fund-raising drive to implement the plans will be undertaken by the officers and trustees. Officers include Virgil N. Shade, president; Stanley W. Miller, first vice president; J. Everett Henderson, second vice president; Edward R. Little, treasurer and Mrs. Joseph J. Kenneally, secretary. A Board of Trustees has been set up and a Board of Councilors to work with them.

Memberships are open to everyone, including industrial, commercial, and other group memberships and horticultural and garden organizations.

Twenty-four garden organizations in the San Diego area have been working for two years to get the organization and incorporation set up and ready to go to work. Now let's all show our support!

Gardening Is Now Big Business

WITH all the plans, from the White House on down, to beautify and add color to the landscape—it is well to pause and consider how much we are now spending on this most wholesome hobby of gardening in America.

It is estimated that one billion dollars went for seeds, bulbs and plants and half a million more for fertilizers and chemicals.

There are fourteen million acres of lawn in the United States, forty-two million gardeners and fifteen thousand affiliated garden clubs, according to estimates. These estimates were made by H. B. Tukey, Sr., President of the International Society for Horticultural Science, and Professor emeritus at Michigan State University. He also stated that the value of horticultural specialties, including cut flowers, bedding and foliage plants and nursery crops has more than doubled in the past ten years.

Here's to more and better gardening by all of us!

Camellia Flower
Arrangement
By Isamu Kawaguchi

Plants I Knew In Japan

by Isamu Kawaguchi

EACH one of us has memories which are associated with plants and flowers. In my case, the memories are of my country, Japan, where I was born, grew up, and which I left six years ago. Many little plants and flowers on the street, at flower shows, or in someone's garden remind me of the things I did ever since I was little—reminders so vivid, that they seem only yesterday.

The other day, a notice was mailed to me from a friend; it contained the schedule for the camellia show. The word "camellia" reminded me of a large camellia tree we used to climb when I was in grade school. The tree was about 20 feet high with two main branches, one branch bore pink flowers and the other white with pink stripes. When the trees were in bloom, we strung the flowers to make leis.

Camellias in Japan are used in many ways: The flowers are popular with flower arrangers, especially for those arrangements used in the tea ceremony. The seeds provide a good oil which is used in the better cosmetics as well as in cooking. The meat of the seed may be rubbed against the squeaky drawer or sticking door to make them work more smoothly; the large amount of oil that its seed contains, serves much the same purpose as beeswax, or a candle, in this country.

The camellia trees can be grown as a hedge or garden tree or even used for "bonsai." They provide color for the winter garden when everything else has died. On frosty, cold, wintry mornings, I used to walk to school along a hedge of "Sasanqua" camellias, a mass of delicate pink blooms. The petals fell as soon as the buds were open, but they kept blooming all winter long.

Another tree which belongs to the camellia family but which is not well known to us here is the tea tree, the young sprouts of which are used for making green tea. The flowers are creamy white, of five petals, with long stamens just like the camellia. Youngsters gather the young, tight tea buds and use them as ammunition for their pop guns—what fun that was! Tea trees are usually grown as hedge on property lines or to protect the garden or crops in the field. They are kept very low by constant trimming; this frequent trimming encourages many more branches which, in turn, provide more young tea leaves. Tea leaves are picked twice a year—both times in the spring.

Then I remember the chrysanthemums of all kinds which were planted in our neighbors' and my father's garden; they were of all colors and sizes. The young shoots of chrysanthemums are edible after they are boiled. They have a spicy flavor all their own—one of my favorite greens. They are usually eaten in a clear soup or simply with the addition of soy sauce. They should be good in salad, too.

Have any of you ever visited a Japanese chrysanthemum show, especially the chrysanthemum doll show? Once a year, in the fall, many parks and gardens have mum shows or mum doll shows. Mum doll shows are the particular ones I would like all of you to see. They are a type of combination flower and doll show in which all the costumes and sceneries are constructed of mums of all sorts and colors. The dolls are life size, the base of each is constructed of straw. If you can imagine the Rose Parade in smaller detail and scale, all made out of mums, you can get some idea. Some of these doll mum shows are open to visitors for as long as a month (the wilted blooms have to be replaced from time to time with fresh ones).

The flower known to all the Western World as the cherry blossom is another flower that brings back many memories to me. "Sakura," as they are known in Japan, bloom all over the country; blooming starts in Kyushu Island to the south as early as in December, progressing on up to the northernmost island, Hokkaido, blooming there in June. There are about 350 kinds of cherry blossoms, all of them known for the short life of the flower after opening. In Washington, D.C. scientists have succeeded to a certain extent in extending the bloom life of their cherry blossom trees by injecting a substance into each tree before bloom begins, but in Japan they are loved by many people for the short but colorful life of the blossom.

In order to increase the viewing period, blossoms to be used for flower arrangements are cut when they are in bud. These are arranged alone most of the time, or perhaps with pine or some green plant for a contrast in color.

The cherry tree leaves, after they are

steamed, and then dried, are used to wrap rice cakes; they give a hint of cherry flavor—the delicate maraschino taste. Also, the blossoms are pickled in salt and dried, after which they are used for brewing a "cherry blossom tea." When hot water is added, the flowers open in the tea and color the water with pink. This tea was used for happy celebrations, but the custom is slowly dying out.

We used to go to view the cherry blossoms twice a year—once in December and again in April. There was a hot-spring, well-known to the Japanese, about 50 miles from where my family lived. The cherry trees in that hot-spring area bloomed in December because of its warm climate and the effects of the surrounding hot springs.

But the best season was in April where, all over the hills and fields, wherever there was a cherry tree, all was pink clouds mixed with the green of wheat and yellow of the "na-no-hana," a mustard type of flower that blooms on a kind of greens which belongs to the cabbage family. Even now I can visualize them clearly with snow-capped mountains in the background, and I shall remember forever the days I walked in the "blizzard of flowers," or, as the Japanese call it, "hana-fubuki."

Many of the garden magazines and catalogs remind me of the abundant flowers of Japan. For instance, the *Lycoris radiata* (Japanese name, higan-bana) is a wild flower which grows all over the country. It has those red lily-shaped flowers with unusually long stamens. The Japanese, especially the older folks, regard them as a poison flower so, of course I, as a little boy, was taught not to touch them. Here in this country they are sold as garden flowers.

The other day I saw an advertisement for an exotic thistle. It was a Japanese wild thistle; it grows on the sunny sides of hills and blooms all year round. It is one of our most disliked plants because of its prickly leaves and flowers. Often Japanese farmers hurt their hands on them when they are cutting grass in the rice fields and banks. Here in America they cost money to buy!

The hydrangea is another one of these wild flowers. They are very small bushes usually growing in the underbrush of forests or in very damp shady places of mountains. The flowers are poor in color as a rule, and florets of bloom appear only along the edges of the cluster of buds. After the florets on the edge die out, then the next row appears, and so on. They continue blooming until the end of summer.

Occasionally one will find a variegated-leaf hydrangea cultivated in a San Diego garden—this is a direct descendant of the wild one. The Japanese call this type "gaku ajisai"—namely, "framed hydrangea," for its flower formation. I always associate this variegated one with the places I used to frequent when in Japan: cool streams, groves of tall cryptomeria trees, and wild honeysuckle—which nearly always are found together.

Oh yes, speaking of "found together," the azalea is another flower which is often evidenced in those same places. From late June through July, one finds mountain azaleas, usually red in color, in most parts of Japan. When they are in bloom, the entire mountain side is red or sometimes pink. They do grow well in rocky mountain areas where they add immensely to the beautiful scenery. Often found with them are the blue mountain wisterias clinging to the tall pine trees or to the rocks and cliffs.

The red azalea has a very sweet taste in the bottom of the flower where the nectars are. I remember well the time when, as a boy, we kids removed all the flowers from father's prized red "bonsai" in order to suck the sweetness from the flowers. And, for doing so, I received a few good spankings and had to stay in the house for three days. This was the most expensive sweet I was ever to taste.

Wild red azalea blossoms are sometimes used in rice cakes to add color. The flowers are picked, then pressed between two thin patties of sweetened rice paste and the confection is then steamed. This process causes the pastry to become semi-translucent, revealing the azalea flowers. They are placed on a serving plate atop a few needles of pine and served with tea. The pastries pick up a hint of the pine scent and are delightful. This type of confection was introduced to Japan from China, via Korea, not so long ago.

I mentioned cryptomerias above; many in this country are not acquainted with these trees. There are a few of them on Park Boulevard in Balboa Park, near the large magnolia tree. When I was five years old, my family was forced to move from the city and live in the country because of the war. It was truly in the country where there was no electricity, no water service, no newspapers, no movies, no shops of any kind. We considered ourselves fortunate to have been able to rent some wealthy family's summer house. In front of the house there was a cryptomeria forest, many of the trees being 60 feet or more in height. On cold winter mornings, we made our fires of the fallen twigs of these trees. Moreover, the lower branches of the trees had to be cut away to encourage growth, so my father cut off many dead branches from which we made good fires.

(continued on page 13)

Hydrangea arrangement by Isamu Kawaguchi.

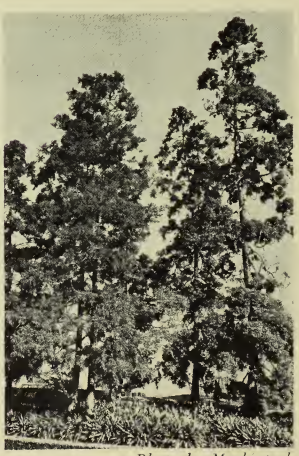


Photo by Mackintosh

Japanese Redwoods *Cryptomeria japonica* behind the Natural History Museum, Balboa Park.

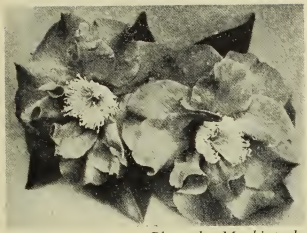


Photo by Mackintosh

Camellia Gulio Nuccio,
grown by Ray Greer.

FAVORITE CAMELLIAS

by Ray Greer

THERE are so many favorite camellias in our garden that if I should ever be so unfortunate as to have to settle for just one camellia and say "This is the one plant I would want above all others" I am afraid that I would be hard pressed to make a decision.

The one camellia that would come the closest to being my one choice would be **Gulio Nuccio.** We have a Gulio plant at the back door, and this year he seems to have outdone himself. For a month or so now he has been a mass of huge, well rabbit-eared red blooms. By way of definition, this means some of the petals are fluted and stand up much like a rabbit's ears. Gulio seems to be expressing his thanks for not having been hacked up last spring. He finally had a chance to show off his vigorous growth habits and healthy green pointed leaves so typical of Gulio. I think this is the first year since I acquired the plant that I haven't cut innumerable scions for grafting so poor Gulio has finally had a full season of undisturbed growth, excluding of course the occasional snip of a bit of branch with a flower for display. The blooms always seem happier when picked with a smidgen of branch and a couple of leaves.

Probably next in line and a very close runner-up would be **Betty Sheffield Supreme.** The original **Betty Sheffield** is a white with red and pink stripes and blotches and really quite handsome. She has given rise to quite a number of sports or mutations which have, in due course of time, made new varieties. She is often referred to as Sporting Betty. One of these, **Betty Sheffield Supreme,** is in my opinion the most outstanding. She has the same form as Betty Sheffield, semi-double to peony form with slightly waved petals, and the same vigorous growth habits. But there the similarity ends. The bloom of **Betty Sheffield Supreme** is white with a picotee or border of rose pink to red border around each petal. The effect, to me, is the epitome of bloom perfection. I don't produce the best **Betty Sheffield Supremes** in the world. More like the opposite effect is achieved. But when I do get a good bloom I feel it more than compensates for the disappointment in the other blooms and bull-nosed buds. When a camellia doesn't bloom well, the proper thing to do is blame it on the location or the dry weather or hot weather or wet weather or cold weather. But never, never blame it on your feeding or watering program or lack of T.L.C. (tender, loving care). This just wouldn't be cricket. When it comes to T.L.C., the biggest contributor to our plants is my partner and cohort, Ted Calloway. Without his continual attention to watering, feeding, repotting and spray program I am afraid our plants would appear neglected. He seems to have been born with green thumbs on both hands. He can do more with a plant with a few touches here and there and a few kind words than I could by working over one full time. I might add that he feel **Betty Sheffield Supreme** would be one of his top-rated

Photo by Mackintosh

Camellia Betty Sheffield Supreme. (Ray Greer) White, pink bordered.

favorites, but a most difficult decision to make. I think he loves them all too much to let any of them know he has a favorite. He has been known to tell a plant to either bloom or get its head cut off for grafting. And the plant responds with a magnificence of bloom. So who's to say you can't commune with a plant?

In the whites there are a number of good camellias from which to choose. Probably the most flamboyant would be **Coronation.** It is a huge white semi-double somewhat open in form with flaring petals surrounding a mass of golden stamens in the center. Similar in growth and form is **White Nun,** but a little more open. Both are rank open growers, a detriment rather than a credit in my opinion. They don't make as nice a bush as some of the more fastidious growers. **Onetia Holland** and **Silver Anniversary** are more compact in their growth habits, with large semi-double flowers that are more full than either **Coronation** or **White Nun.** One of the older varieties and still one of my favorites is **Elizabeth Boardman.** Not as spectacular as some of the others, but it has large semi-double blooms with a rounded form and fluted petals. The old-time **Finlandia** is always a good choice and a good bloomer. I might throw in **Grand Finale** with a beautiful flaring of stamens in the center, **Bride's Bouquet** a large semi-double somewhat open, **Shiro Chan** with its cluster of white to pinkish white petaloids in the center and **Conrad Hilton** a rather full semi-double.

From the reds and rose pinks there is a large number of quite satisfactory varieties. I might start with the beautiful semi-double **Reg Ragland.** Then add such good ones as **Adolphe Audusson, Sunset Glory, Firefalls, Mathotiana Supreme, Aaron's Ruby** and **Clarise Carlton.** The list wouldn't be complete without the relatively new **Mark Alan** with his unusual combination of broad and narrow petals and petaloids. The pinks would have to include the old standby full peony form **Debutante,** the spectacular **Mrs. D. W. Davis** and **Drama Girl, Marjorie Magnificent** for corsage use, **Helen K.** with her delicate pink shadings, and the large semi-double **Coral Pink Lotus.** I must mention my other partner, René Prince, at this point and mention his favorite, the petite formal **Wilamina.** She is a good grower and produces an abundance of bloom over a long season.

Probably the most outstanding of the "sweet-pea" color pinks is **Ballet Dancer,** a full peony flower that blooms well and has such a delicate shading of pink to white. Another, **Mary Wheeler,** opens well for me, but doesn't size very well. We have had good luck with the old **Horkan** and the newer and similar Bradford's **Apple Blossom.** A semi-double that has done well and is one of Ted's favorites is **Dr. Tinsley.**

I think it is with the variegated blooms that I find the most enjoyment. The list of varieties to enjoy is a long one. One of the most striking is the old-time **Iwane.** The blooms aren't large, but the contrast of red and white is so vivid. Similar in coloration is the newer **Mercury Var.** with much larger and more spectacular blooms. Both are rather open semi-doubles. Another favorite is **Kyo Kanoko** which reminds me of a huge red and white carnation. An eye catcher is **Maroon and Gold,** with its combination of deep red petals and bright golden stamens—a small flower, but a profuse bloomer. Of course I must add **Adolphe Audusson Var.** and the beautiful **A. A. Special, Gulio Nuccio Var.** and **Special, Richard Nixon, Sweeti-Vera** and the similar **Carter's Sunburst,** the newer **Kickoff,** and the old beautifully moired and marbled **Oniji.** I could go on and on.

I can't consider ending this article without mentioning the old and much abused **Imperator.** The loose peony red blooms it produces aren't spectacular in themselves. In fact when a single bloom is displayed it doesn't look at all impressive. But we have an Imperator plant in our patio that each year around Christmas time gives us our own living Christmas tree. It is a mass of red balls hung on the tips of the branches and really is quite a sight.

This is not a very complete list, it is only some of the varieties that I have enjoyed. What is appealing to me may leave another person cold.

But that is the nice thing about camellias. There is such a multitude of forms and colors that there surely is one to please every person.

Photo by Mackintosh

Camellia Mark Alan. **(Ray Greer)**

Note pointed petals and tall "rabbit ears."

Photo by Mackintosh

Azalea, Pink Pearl.
From the garden of Harvey F. Short.

AZALEAS

Harbingers of Spring

by Harvey F. Short

AZALEAS, a splendid group of evergreen shrubs belonging to the Rhododendron family are truly unequalled in the many types offered to us. The range of colors, the styling and size of the blossoms, the great variation in foliage from very small to very large leaves, all contribute greatly to the beauty of azaleas as landscape material, whether used as pot plants, mass plantings, tree types, espaliers or hedges. The growth habits extend from low compact forms up to the vigorous open growth of large specimens. A large variety of the popular members of the azalea family are now to be found in most nurseries.

Belgian Hybrids

This category offers an extended flowering season from October through April and some of the showiest large double or semi-double blooms, suitable for arrangements, in addition to scattered sprays of flowers during the year. Favorites are the gorgeous **Albert and Elizabeth,** whose white petals are edged with deep coral pink, and **Paul Schame,** a double salmon-pink and **Professor Walters,** a large single pink with dark blotches that make it look like a pelargonium; and **Pink Pearl,** with large flowers of delicate light pink coloring which often reblooms all year.

Southern Indicas

These varieties are also called Sun Azaleas because they have been selected for their vigor and sun tolerance, but their blooms still show off best in partial shade. Long popular in the deep south, they are the ones usually associated with the famous gardens of that area. The large single flowers of **Fielder's White,** the purple of **Phoenicea** and the brilliant red of **Pride of Dorking** are worthy choices in this group.

Rutherfordiana Hybrids

These types offer distinctive and attractive selections with excellent foliage, vigorous growth and striking colors. Flowers of delicate orchid, white, pink and red to orange-red coloring are usually "hose-in-hose" or double forms.

Kurume

The Kurume group came out of Japan in the early 1930's. The Coolidge Rare Plant Gardens in Pasadena was one of three places in the United States selected to receive seeds of these plants. From the resulting seedlings came at least a hundred varieties differing in color and size of flowers, that were later introduced to this area for the first time. Often these azaleas were a solid mass of bloom that gave the gardens a flashing array of color glory that probably has never been equalled in Southern California. It became customary for garden enthusiasts to make pilgrimages to the Coolidge Gardens each spring for the annual Azalea Festival. Often the number of visitors in a week would be as high as 10,000.

Many fine specimen Kurumes can still be found in the Pasadena area. Their Oriental styling, profusion of bloom (many scented delightfully) and growth characteristics, whether tuned for rock gardens or planted to reflect their beauty in trickling streams and pools, are well expressed in the popular Descanso Gardens at La Canada. Some of these favorites still available are the pale pink **Seraphim, Santor, Laughing Water,** and **Snowbird.** Kurumes are hardy, less subject to temperature changes.

Satsuki or Macranthas

These varieties are late-flowering and very worthy summer types. With this group one embraces high garden interest that rounds out almost a year of extended color sequences.

Culture

Culture of azaleas is not too difficult. They enjoy various soil mixtures leaning to the acid side. These may be leafmold (redwood, pine and oak) and light loam, but my best success through the years has been with two-thirds peat moss or all peat moss, with special attention to good drainage. Peat should *always* be thoroughly moistened before using.

Transplanting may take place any time except when the new leaves begin to show and until they mature. After that azaleas may be repotted even when in full bloom. In time, peat tends to sink a bit, so keep the base of the plant trunk a little high so that the original soil level will not be covered.

Three to four feedings of cottonseed meal or commercial camellia-azalea food from March to September serve well. Mix it into the top of the peat so it will not cake. One or two ap-

plications of Stabilized Iron Chelates to counteract the action of salts and alkalinity on the general water supply of this area is a real necessity.

Watering is most important if good drainage is assured. Keep the plants moist but not stagnant. Never let azaleas dry out especially when planting.

Prune to shape after flowering is over and follow up if necessary until July when the new buds set.

To control any pests, such as aphids and mites, give occasional light sprayings of Malathion at regular intervals during the growing season.

Gift plants of potted azaleas will do well if, as soon as convenient, they are transplanted to the garden or kept on in pots for patio display. If properly cared for, they will probably bloom again the same year. They do not thrive in indoor dryness and heat. Keep moist and outdoors as much as possible.

There are enough azaleas, as well as camellias, suited to our climate to make the gardens of San Diego rival those of the South. Once established, azaleas are little work to maintain and how they do light up the shade portions of the garden when in bloom. Out of season they provide fine foliage shrubs for the landscape. Planting azaleas is a labor that satisfies, an investment for years of beauty.

Coolidge Gardens Azalea Display arranged by Harvey F. Short

COOLIDGE RARE PLANT GARDENS

The Coolidge Rare Plant Gardens on Foothill Boulevard in East Pasadena were a favorite spot for a visit both by discriminating plant lovers, and by color photographers who swarmed there to photograph their colorful rarities.

The Gardens were particularly noted for their large number of select new varieties of fine camellias. Their epiphyllums and cascade chrysanthemums attracted hordes of visitors during the blooming season, since they had the finest and most beautiful varieties. However as land values mounted in this area, the land occupied by the nurseries became too high-priced to continue there. The epiphyllums and the azaleas were closed out in 1958, and the last of the three nurseries was closed in 1960.

LD-50, A GUIDE TO TOXICITY IN PESTICIDES

Pesticides vary greatly in their degree of toxicity to mammals. A guide to relative toxicity is the LD-50 factor. This indicates the amount of the particular pesticide by weight required to kill 50% of the animals on which the material is tested (a gruesome thought!)

By considering the LD-50 factors of pesticides we get a clue as to the degree of care we must exercise in handling the material. Any pesticide with an LD-50 factor of less than 20 is extremely dangerous and must be handled with the greatest care. Such materials are generally not available to the home gardener. On the other hand, pesticides with an LD-50 factor of over 100 are relatively safe when used as directed.

Injury from pesticides may come about in three different ways. All pesticides are poisonous if taken orally in sufficient quantity. Other pesticides can build up in the system over a period of time through prolonged improper exposure. Since this is a gradual process, it is harder to detect. Still other pesticides may be absorbed through the skin. These should be handled with gloves and protective equipment.

The following is a list of commercially available pesticides and their LD-50 factors. They are listed in the order of their toxicity:

Parathion	3.5
Thimet	3.7
Phosdrin	7.
Systox	9.
Endrin	25.
Nicotine	55.
Aldrin	55.
Dieldrin	80.
Heptachlor	90.
Rotenone	140.
Ethion	179.
DDT	250.
Sevin	600.
Pyrethrum	820.
Malathion	1,000.
Methoxychlor	6,000.
Tedion	14,700.

Kingwood Center
Mansfield, Ohio

The Green Years

-- a Newcomer Looks at California

by Clifford H. Pope

THE newcomer to southern California interested in gardening becomes acutely aware of certain things: decomposed granite, ice plants, gophers, sprinkler heads, piping, and, of course, irrigation. Each of these holds surprises. In many parts of our country the gardener may live fully and die happily with but the vaguest concept of these. Why, then, do they have such significance in southern California?

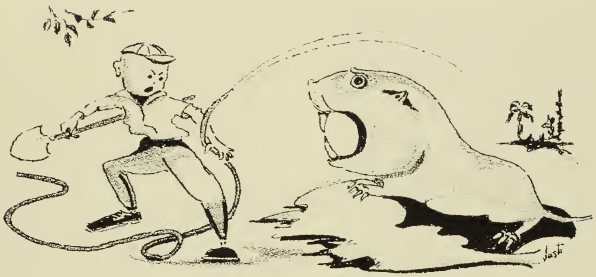
Let us take them up one by one. The newcomer discovers that he at once becomes a partisan: either he swears by pop-up sprinkler heads or roots for those that don't pop. To say that either will do, will not do. Those that don't pop are always lurking there to trip you up, whereas the poppers won't trip you unless they become one-way actors that pop up but not down. When it comes to piping, the problem waxes even more complex, but again he must take sides; he dare not pipe down if he wants friends. Galvanized piping is strong as well as puncture proof, but a deposit does slowly accumulate inside. Plastic piping, on the other hand, is neither strong nor puncture proof, but it does not acquire a deposit. In spite of its lack of resistance to stab and cut of garden tools, gophers are not tempted by it, and a puncture or cut can be repaired with remarkable speed. So run the piping arguments in part. But certain personality traits enter into the picture, especially for the absent-minded gardener, as the following incident will show.

One day when working on a flower bed I came across a particularly tough root but managed to cut it loose. When I picked the piece up I recognized it as a bit of the brown plastic hose pipe that I had carefully buried not so long before to conduct water to a more distant bed. A few days later my faithful high school assistant cut a section from the other end of this "root," actually giving me a feeling of relief; "If I hadn't, he would have," I thought. Our combined score for three years: plastic pipe cut or pierced six times, two of the cuts in exactly the same place.

After living for years near granite quarries in an eastern state, I had come to think of granite as the rock of ages, but in southern California this is a gross misconception; decomposed granite looms large on the horizon literally as well as figuratively, this part of the state being mainly composed of granite in various stages of disintegration. Decomposed granite is useful in many ways and even comes in a variety of colors. For example, an excellent driveway can be made of it. You merely have the delivery truck spread it; then you wet it down and drive your car back and forth over it. Soon you have a driveway much more attractive than a hardtop one and at a small part of the cost. It must be admitted that decomposed-granite driveways are suitable only for level or nearly level places; it is readily eroded.

Ice plant strikes the new arrival as a gardener's dream. Some of the many kinds bloom for months and have brilliant and profuse blossoms; all are tough, require little care, and spread like fire even in poor soil. Parts of any plant will grow into new ones if just casually put in the ground. But the more you see of it the more you realize that ice plant is the gardener's pitfall and in general should be confined to banks. There it serves the valuable purpose of halting erosion. For those with limited time, ice plant may be a blessing; any neighbor will pass a little over the fence.

The ice-plant dream may quickly melt away, whereas the nightmares brought on by the gopher never end. If you are fussy about names and introductions, it should be presented informally as Botta's pocket gopher, formally as *Thomomys bottae*. Biologically speaking, gophers are some of God's most interesting creatures. Who would ever expect this little rodent to have outside, fur-lined pouches for carrying dirt, plus the ability to grow four feet of teeth a year! Each of its four diggers would increase a foot in length if not worn away by the continual digging that is the gopher's necessity. These characteristics are soon submerged by the wrath that this mite of a creature can stir up in the human breast. The gopher himself is fully able to return this wrath in kind. A friend related how he ran one out of its hole by a stream of water. The drenched gopher became so irate that it stood erect, and, with bared teeth, dared my friend to engage in a fair fight. The fight, though not exactly fair, ended the way you have guessed:



Cartoon by Justine Wishek

Botta's Pocket Gopher in action.

it was a flat failure for the poor gopher —my friend had a large shovel handy.

Gophers revel in newly seeded lawns. The first day our new lawn netted in the exact center one gopher and its huge pile of dirt. The gophers do psychological damage to gardeners by dividing them into camps of those who use poisons of various kinds and those who use traps. Some even degrade themselves to lure the gopher to his death with expensive perfume.

The person who comes from a region of heavy rainfall, let us say the southern Appalachians, cannot believe his eyes when he sees water being sprayed over square miles of fields. Almost as great is the shock when he is told that under every fruit tree squirts a little sprinkler. But after a few months of getting used to artificial distribution of water, he begins to feel that maybe this is good; the water goes exactly when and where it is needed with a minimum of waste; and the withholding of water serves to control weeds. He may even go so far as to resent rain because it interferes with his watering schedule. Back there in the Appalachians, countless millions of gallons of water are wasted hourly as thousands of streams channel them down through the mountains and on to the ocean. Moreover, the constant rains enable weeds to get completely out of hand.

The early Californian may have dreamt of gold, but his descendant today dreams of hoses absent-mindedly left running, and wakes in the middle of the night to realize with dismay that his dream is based on reality.

Ornamental Horticulture Class Offered

A NEW class in Ornamental Horticulture is now beginning at Mesa College campus, 7250 Artillery Drive. This part of a two-year curriculum is planned to qualify graduates for work in nurseries, parks and golf courses. Eventually there may be a group of well trained gardeners available.

A course in Landscape Materials is offered under the Evening College program. This stresses the study and use of plants in Landscape Design, and the form, texture, structure and color relationship of plants. There will be field trips to parks and nurseries. Marshall Ploof is the instructor. New classes will start February 3.

Tell your favorite gardener about this training now available to him.

PLANTS I KNEW IN JAPAN

(continued from page 7)

The cryptomeria in Japan is very versatile; it is used for house lumber and furniture and house ornaments which utilize its beautiful grain; and for wine-making tubs valued for the wood's aroma. Carved wooden bases for vases—the flower arranger's delight, soy tubs (popular among gardeners in America), all sorts of boxes for all sorts of uses, even "geta" the wooden sandal shaped somewhat like "zori"—all these are made from its wood.

There are so many things the Japanese make from plant materials. The most important plant in Japan, probably, is bamboo. In the U. S. it is known as an exotic garden plant, but in Japan it is much more. It is famous for use in baskets, but is also widely employed in making furniture, toys, umbrellas, screens, lampshades, and fishing tools.

The bamboo sheds its "skin" as it is growing out of the shoot; these are collected by children as a rule, and later sold to processors. After being shaved paper-thin and cleaned, these are used as meat wrappers and lunch bags. They are pasted on cloth, paper, and wood to be used for many purposes. They make paper strong and semi-waterproof. They are used for gift wrapping papers, candy boxes, women's accessories, and rope. It is sad to think of all these unique articles being replaced by plastic, aluminum, waxed paper, veneer—all considered as advances of science.

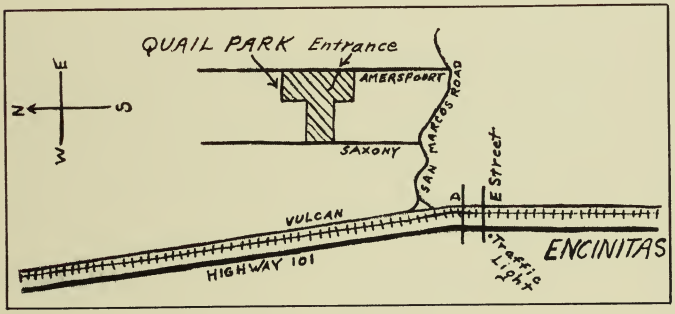
Many of the wild plants I used to see when I was small are gradually passing from the peoples' lives as the villages grow into towns, and from towns to cities, to metropolises to megalopolises. Formerly, rice cakes were flavored with wild chrysanthemums, for instance, and wrapped in treated oak or cherry leaves; now they are flavored with artificial flavorings and wrapped in plastic "leaves" printed to resemble the natural ones. Swamps, where I used to go to pick pussywillows, cattails, and wild irises, are fast being changed into housing projects. It is the same everywhere—here or in Japan.

Some may call it industrialization, some may call it progress. Call it what you will, but to me something of the zest, something of the loveliness, something of the enchantment of life slips away with the passing of each of these associations with nature, and our lives, as a consequence, are left the poorer.

THE DAWN REDWOOD

Rarest Plant Growing In America Today

by Chauncy I. Jerabek



AMONG the trees at Quail Gardens, Encinitas, the one with the most interesting background is the Dawn Redwood, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* (pronounced glip-toe-strow-boy-des). It became extinct in North America over twenty million years ago and paleobotanists consider it to be the rarest plant specimen growing in America today.

From time to time, during the last hundred years, fossil specimens of this tree were collected at the John Day fossil beds in northeastern Oregon, in the lake beds in the vicinity of Spokane, Washington, near the junction of Highways 28 and 395; also it was found in various localities in Nevada and in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains in northern California.

All this time, this genus had only been found in fossil specimens. In 1941, after studying fragments from Korea and Japan, a Japanese paleobotanist, Shigen Miki, concluded that these specimens were not the same as the varieties of redwood found in northern California and southwestern Oregon. He also deduced that those fossil trees were non-existent in their living form.

In 1944, Dr. Tsang Wang, a botanist of China's Forest Research Bureau, made a trip to the remote village of Mo-tao-chi, located in the Valley of the Tiger, Central China. In his wanderings he came upon a magnificent tree unlike anything he had ever seen before. He brought back samples of its cones and foliage to Nanking, and presented them to Dr. Wan Chun Cheng, Professor of Forestry at the National Central University, who also discussed them with Dr. Hsen Hsa Hu of Fan Memorial Institute of Biology, Peiping. Upon close examination, they found the foliage and cones were identical with the fossil specimens found in Korea and Japan, so it was named *Metasequoia glyptostroboides,* creating a new family, Metasequoiaceae.

Dr. E. D. Merrill, former director of the Arnold Arboretum, became so interested in this great discovery that he sent a contribution to help finance an expedition to collect seeds. In the fall of 1947, Dr. Hu and his caravan journeyed to Central China, through the Red Basin of Szochuan and ad-

jacent Hupeh, on their way to Motao-chi, where they found not only scattered living trees but groups of them growing along the streams and rice paddies.

From the seeds received by the Arnold Arboretum, three were sent to the late Col. Arthur Fischer, Director of the San Diego Natural History Museum at that time. He brought them to the Balboa Park Nursery and asked me to sprout them. I had good luck with all three.

When the seedlings were about a foot high, Col. Fischer planted one in his front garden on the corner of Evergreen and Kingsley in the Loma Portal area of San Diego. Another was established in the nursery grounds of Balboa Park. The third one was presented to the late Major General William T. Clement, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego. He had it planted in the rear garden of his residence on the base where it received special care. (See photograph.) It is now over forty feet high and still growing.

This Dawn Redwood showed promise of becoming such an outstanding tree that the chief gardener, Gerald Wellington, made some rooted cuttings of it during its 1953 deciduous period. Sergeant Paul Thomson, stationed on the base at this time, showed so much interest in this tree that he was given a rooted cutting. Having no home of his own, he took it to his father-in-law, Charles Benlehr, at 997 Eolus Street in Encinitas, where it was planted in a narrow strip between a rose garden and an avocado grove. It grew so rapidly that in a few years, it was too large for the small space it occupied, so it was donated to the Quail Gardens Foundation, Inc. In January, 1963, P. J. Miller, the head gardener and his crew, transplanted this valuable tree to the southeastern section of the Quail Gardens where it may now be seen near Amersfoot Drive. It will begin to leaf out about March.

The cones and wood textures of the Redwood and the Metasequoia are similar. The chief difference is in the soft green foliage of the latter which, in autumn, turns a very lovely tone of apricot-gold with a slight flush of strawberry-pink, before it suddenly sheds its needles and becomes bare and dormant while our Pacific Coast Redwood remains evergreen. Its branches extend downward instead of upward as do the Dawn Redwood. Out of the dark ages, a living tree for today! Look for it when you visit Quail Gardens.

Dawn Redwood

Tree planted in 1951 at Marine Corps Recruit Depot. Since this picture of Lt. General William T. Clement, taken in 1953, it has become traditional for every Commanding Officer to pose with the tree in order to gauge its rate of growth.

WILDFLOWERS ON THE BEN HULSE HIGHWAY

by Eleanor McCown

THIS should be a banner year for wild flowers in all areas of Southern California. In no area will they be more welcome and more conspicuous than in the lower Colorado Desert east of the Imperial Valley. One of the newest roads to cross this area is the Ben Hulse Highway that travels east and north from Brawley to Blythe. Already popular with desert folk as a recreational and picnic area, it should be a lovely and interesting trip for those seeking wild flowers.

About thirteen miles east of Brawley, the Ben Hulse Highway crosses the Highline Canal and ascends the beach line of the ancient lake that once covered all of the valley. The beach line itself in this region is quite rocky and gravel quarries are busily carrying away large portions of it. Where the beach has not been disturbed, quite often bits of pottery and the charred remains of campfires can be found. These were left by an ancient Indian tribe that camped on the shores of the lake. The most noticeable plant life here are two shrubs, Ephedra and Creosote Bush. Ephedra or Desert Tea is a straggly, seemingly leafless shrub, light green in color. Male and female blossoms are borne on separate plants, the staminate being the most noticeable. These appear as small catkin-like blooms with the stamens bringing out the only coloring. The pistillate flowers appear as tiny, papery cones. This plant contains considerable tanin and is often brewed into tea.

Just past the beach line, the road crosses the East Mesa. This is a sandy area with scattered dunes and occasional groves of Mesquite. The most conspicuous shrub in this area is the Creosote Bush, *Larrea divaricata.* Even

Photo by Eleanor McCown

Fairy Duster, *Calliandra eriophylla.*

in dry years this shrub, with its tiny deep green leaves and blackish stems, gives this area a green appearance. With the abundant rains this winter, it will be exceptionally pretty with its tiny bright yellow blossoms and equally attractive fuzzy white seed balls.

The Sand Verbena, *Abronia villosa,* finds its home on the mesa and this spring should paint all the open spaces with its rosy-lavender flowers. Wherever the sand has piled into small and large dunes, the Dune Primrose will be growing. With its large white flowers and delicious scent, it should form large clumps this year. These plants when they die in the summer will form the skeletons that are sought for "baskets" and "bird cages." Less common but a companion plant to the primrose is the Desert Lily, *Hesperocallis undulata.* This lovely fragrant lily reminds one of a small Easter Lily. The white flowers have a green band down the middle of the back of each petal. The bulbs of this lily are sometimes as deep as two feet in the sand.

In the flat open areas many small white Forget-Me-Nots, tiny Lupines, small yellow Primroses, and other annuals can be found.

After crossing the Coachella Canal, the road leaves the East Mesa and goes up and through the Algodones Sand Dunes. These conspicuous dunes, looking so white from a distance, have considerable plant life even in dry years. The traveler will most likely be distracted here from flora to fauna by the Dune Buggies that can be seen at almost any time going up, over, and around the dunes.

The Dunes can claim some plants that are unique to the area. One of the loveliest is the Silver-Leaved Sunflower. This perennial should be very lovely this spring with its large silvery leaves and bright yellow flowers. Another plant that is most unusual is called Sand Food. This parasite, *Ammobroma sonorae,* has a gray disk-like flowering head containing tiny purple flowers. All that can be seen from the surface is this head. A long underground stem extends sometimes four feet to the host plant, usually the Buckwheat, *Eriogonum deserticola,* or the shrub Coldenia. Indians of the gulf area found these stems a major source of food. Baked they are said to taste a little like a yam. An unusually large variety of Spanish Needle, *Palafoxia linearis,* with deep pink flowering heads and slender dark green leaves, is also unique to the dunes.

On the east side of the dunes, the runoff water from the mountains is trapped in numerous basins. Because of this extra supply of water, this area has an almost tropical growth with Verbenas, Primroses and other annuals. Palo Verde trees are numerous in this area and they will be beautiful this spring when covered with their light yellow blossoms.

Leaving the dunes behind, the road descends slightly to the little railroad town of Glamis. From here it crosses the S.P. railroad tracks and enters the territory of the Ironwood tree. With the Chocolate Mountains in the background, the rocky terrain is corrugated with numerous washes. The Ironwood trees grow quite large here and when covered with purple blossoms in June are very striking. Occasional Ocotillos and Palo Verde trees can also be seen here. Cactus are not as plentiful as in many desert areas but three types are occasionally seen on the slopes of the Chocolate Mountains. Most attractive are the Barrel Cactus, whose spines are tipped with red, making a brilliant splash of color against the brown rocks even when not in bloom. The Beavertail passes unnoticed except when it is in bloom and then the large cerise flowers are eyecatchers. Cholla cactus, with its teddy-bear, shape, are scattered in the area.

A shrub that is related to the beautiful Pink Powderpuff Calliandra of the tropics is found in large quantities along the banks of the washes and ravines. Only after a rainy season does

Desert Lily, *Hesperocallis undulata.* *Photo by Mackintosh*

the passerby really see this shrub, *Calliandra eriophylla,* for with ample moisture, the shrub revives from a state of wilt and the tiny ferny foliage greens up and blossoms appear that give it the common name of Fairy Duster. The showy stamens make up the largest part of the flower, bursting out of the very small red corolla. These shrubs make splashes of pink that show up brilliantly against the greys and browns of the rocky background.

Numerous annuals will be found growing deep in the washes under the Ironwood and Palo Verde trees. Most noticeable is the large purple Phacelia. Two members of the Cucumber family are to be found here. One is the palmate leaved Gourd often called Coyote Melon and a much smaller leaved species Brandegea with tiny white flowers and thin leaves. Numerous disk-like pustules cover the upper surfaces of the leaves. Other shrubs in the washes are Desert Lavender, *Hyptis emoryi,* with grey leaves, small lavender flowers and a pleasant lavender-plus-turpentine odor, Squaw Thorn, whose small red berries are cherished by the birds of the desert and Goat Nut, *Simmondsia californica,* a leathery-leaved grey-green shrub with small oily nuts that are quite tasty when roasted.

As the road winds through the Chocolate Mountains and down into the wide reaches of the Milipitas Wash, the traveler will find many delightful places to stop and hike the hillsides or stroll up a ravine. Sometimes, rounding a curve in the ravine, the hiker is pleasantly surprised to find the whole hillside covered with tiny blue lupines or golden with dwarf California Poppies. One of the oddest of wildflowers to be found on the rocky hillsides is the Ghost Flower *Mohavea confertiflora.* The very pale cream flowers with a ragged edge and tiny lines of purple dots is related to the Mimulus.

Only on foot will the traveler see one of the desert's miracles. These are the "Belly Flowers" so called by desert folk because to really see them you must get close to the ground. Some are no more than a single flower and stem. Many different species can be found among these tiny flowers.

When planning a trip to this area be sure to fill the picnic basket and the thermos, take along a canteen of water and a "Guide to Desert Wildflowers" and prepare to have a most wonderful trip.

ROLAND HOYT* RECOMMENDS

A Bush Aster

LOOKING for brilliant early spring color in a small, rarely found shrub, one turns to *Aster fruticosus* which reaches its height some time in April this far south. This plant has not been seen too often in these regions since the days of Kate Sessions who always had a sense of direction toward quality and service in plants, together with the initiative in doing something about availability. Frequently we talk about the traveler, in particular navy people who come home with a handful of seed from some far-away plant that has appealed to them in some way or other. The recipient nurseryman will have a new and possibly colorful species . . . for awhile.

The last time the species above was to be found here, the Washington Street Nursery people dug up seedlings from a planting high on a bank at Sharp Memorial Hospital. This should indicate the ease with which it might be made available to the planting public and should constitute a powerful homily in the matter of publicity. Shamefully, the last plants at the above nursery were "dumped" because of no calls . . . one could do a job of selling of course. This all highlights the need for promotion and that is what this nod and good opinion attempts.

Alfred Hottes

Bush Aster
Aster fruticosus

The plant is a rounding, woody shrub 2-3′ in height, made up as a light, branchy structure, but with a certain compact aspect overall when growing dry and in the sun which is a necessity. It can very well be grown with our typical native flora and brings to it the unusual and dependable coloring in a kind of lavender-purple. Look for it at the round brick building of the Sentinel Savings and Loan Association immediately east of Mission Valley Center. Several eighteen inch specimens there will appear in low mounds in a base-setting of white and lavender alyssum . . . color combination that wheels and swirls in season so that few who have taken the trouble to look will forget.

*Fellow ALSA, author of *Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions.*

A BOOK IN THE HAND

by Alice M. Greer

***Holiday Flower Arrangements;* Emma Hopkinson Cyphers. Hearthside Press, 1965, 129 pages; $4.95.**

IN THIS revised version of Holiday Flower Arrangements, Emma Cyphers has given us a work full of suggestions to help us carry on our beautiful and imperishable heritage of decoration with plant material. The author presents ideas for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Hallowe'en, weddings, birthdays, etc. This volume is filled with 105 halftone illustrations and two large color plates to guide one in making arrangements for big and little events throughout the year. The intent of this book is to serve as encouragement to homemakers unschooled in flower show exhibiting. The objective in the home is quite different from that at a public flower show where the arrangement functions individually as an existing subject composed within a limited and defined space. In the home the flower arrangement is but a part of the pattern for producing a warm, cheerful and friendly atmosphere.

"Flower arrangements satisfy a deep need for self-expression, for nothing else so requires the hands, eyes and mind and heart to work in unison. Beautiful arrangements that express the thought and personality of the maker always catch the eye." Cyphers dispels all doubts as to your ability to combine flowers into decorative designs. She focuses attention on potentialities and selects illustrations with an eye to basic suggestions that will kindle a spark of imagination that will in turn set your thinking afire to produce your own designs. She emphasizes the theory of unity and harmony; the suitability of the component parts of decoration and location of the completed design to achieve together a harmonious unity of oneness.

In the make-up of this volume often the plates are many pages removed from the related texts, so the reader may lose interest while searching. Nevertheless this book is recommended to add to your library or to use as a gift.

***Guide to the Plants of the Everglades National Park*: Tropic Publishing Co., Box 613, Coral Gables, Florida. 1965; paper bound; $2.00.**

Alex Hawkes, author of *Orchids, Their Botany and Culture*—(see CALIFORNIA GARDEN, June-July 1961 for review)—started working with and writing about orchids when he was a boy of eleven living in Florida. Since then his travels and studies have carried him to the remote corners of the globe.

Everglades National Park — at the southern tip of the Florida peninsula, contains 23 square miles of land and water and forms one of the most unusual wilderness areas in the United States. The plants of this area are the subject of this publication.

Although it is written primarily for the use of visitors to the Park and for the identification and appreciation of the indigenous plants, it is a splendid source of reference for any horticulturist or nature lover. Just reading the guidebook fills one with the desire to explore not only the Everglades of Florida, but other far-flung areas, and perhaps to study with greater detail the plant life at one's elbow. Hawkes writes with verve and enthusiasm that is contagious. The colored plates are superb; the text, short, interesting and absorbing.

Content with what thou seest

by M. A. Lippitt

MANY will welcome back our popular contributor, Marion Almy Lippitt. In her philosophical, nature-appreciative style, she addresses timely vignettes to the inimitable David Grayson in answer to his *The Friendly Road*. From time to time we will share these vignettes with you.

* * *

For several weeks, Mr. Grayson, I had been experiencing what the old Saints called "a period of dryness." Had my observations come to an end? Then in rereading your book *"The Friendly Road,"* I came upon the paragraph that picked me up and stood me on my feet. You said;

I am firmly convinced that the prime quality to be cultivated by the pilgrim is humility of spirit; he must be willing to accept Adventure in whatever garb she chooses to present herself. He must be able to see the shining form of the unusual through the dull garments of the normal.

After that I was no longer "dry bones." Inspiration flowed again.

The air was warm this morning, Mr. Grayson, but the wind came in cool gusts. I watched the different reactions registered by each separate tree.

The pine tree rocks imperceptibly while every needle quivers in the wind. It seems to say, "Be calm, be sensitive to what life brings." The olive trees look distraught and temperamental. They are emotionally unstable. The eucalyptus branches sway rhythmically on the tiptoes of their long gray trunks, like ballerinas in their dance.

Calendar of Care

Down-to-Earth Gardening for February & March

by Ed Ogden

SPRING Is Here! That annual proclamation stirs the blood of the gardener just as it awakens the sap in trees and flowers. The happy debate as to just when Spring does arrive in Southern California (with a vote from this source that we enjoy Spring the year 'round) becomes moot at this point because all outdoors is broadcasting to all the senses from the final authority, Mother Nature, that truly Spring Is Here!

Our region's unique ability to duplicate and improve on gardens from all areas of the world is most apparent at this season. Our Japanese gardens are at their best with bloom from azaleas, flowering fruits, camellias and dogwood; conifers are fresh with new growth, and buds are breaking on deciduous trees; and blended in the scene are overtones of foliage and berry colors from nandina, mahonia, cotoneaster and the like. Our New England gardens are coming out of the winter doldrums with early bulbs and perennials joining the winter annuals and flowering trees. Rock gardens and alpine plantings are bright with bloom and new growth, whether from succulents, bulbs or flowering miniatures. Spanish and Early California gardens are showing off bloom of mesembryanthemums, birds of paradise, succulents, bougainvillea and acacias, blended with the last of the winter berries.

Desert gardens are in bloom with native flowers, ocotillo, aloes and allied succulents, yuccas, Texas sage and some of the cacti. Tropical gardens are coming out with color masses and accents from birds of paradise, flame vine, hibiscus, bougainvillea, lantana, acacias, cassias, orchid trees, flowering eucalyptus, flowering tea trees, pink Indian hawthorn, cymbidums, jasmines and the like. Woodsy settings are alive with new growth on pines and ferns, and color from coral bells, callas, azaleas, naturalized bulbs, and trailing vines. On every hand are glimpses of springtime from all parts of the world, for us to enjoy in Southern California.

Experienced gardeners are making their last plantings of stock, snaps, Iceland poppies, cinerarias, calendulas, pansies, violas, larkspur and related cool-weather annuals. And it's the last chance to plant small columbine, delphinium, Shasta daisies and similar perennials for good results next summer and fall. Later on quart- and gallon-size plants will be necessary for results this year. Incidentally, gardeners are successfully planting tulips, daffodils, narcissus, hyacinths and other "fall" bulbs as late as the first of March in recent years, in case you haven't gotten around to it.

Annuals for spring and summer color appear on bedding plant tables at the nurseries toward the end of this period. Zinnias, marigolds, the reliable petunias in many new varieties, asters, dwarf dahlias, cosmos and many others will be available. Dahlia tubers and canna roots (try the new Pfitzer dwarfs), tuberoses for fragrance, begonia tubers and gloxinia seedlings—all tempt the gardener who can see into the months ahead.

The vegetable gardener will find tomatoes in several varieties, bell peppers and hot chilies, lettuce and celery—and everbearing strawberries for gardeners who let packaged strawberry divisions slip by earlier in the year.

Planting of bare-root fruit trees and roses often is successful up through the middle of March, weather permitting, now that the growers are refrigerating dormant stock and shipping throughout the season. A few precautions are always in order:—keeping the roots moist at all times, watering in with one of the vitamin-hormone solutions, frequent waterings until the plants are well established, and avoiding the use of fresh steer manure in planting. If you don't have fixed notions on the subject, ask the nurseryman to prune back your fruit trees for planting, and don't go into shock when he cuts two-thirds of the wood away.

Pruning and dormant spraying of deciduous fruit trees, berry vines and roses must be done now if you missed it in January. Remember that the method of pruning differs with the variety—best refer to a pruning manual. Your nurseryman can help you on the spray to use, including such advices as avoiding lime-sulphur on apricots, and giving peaches a second spraying just as the buds break. Give the trees and vines a mulch and light feeding after pruning, and a heavy fertilization after bloom and fruit is set.

For the first time in almost a decade the rains earlier this winter have accomplished the thorough leaching of Southern California soils. Excavations for swimming pools and building lots indicate a minimum of at least three to four feet of penetration from the

rains, with most areas double that, which is plenty for good leaching action. We can expect this subsurface moisture to remain available to deep-rooted plants well into the dry season, and plants with less root system will need infrequent watering until then. But a special word of caution on new plantings: bare-root stock needs free moisture around the roots. Container-grown plants will drink up the moisture in the root ball that was in the container before planting, so follow a faithful program of frequent watering even though the soil near the root zone may indicate plenty of moisture.

A great deal of damage was done to many hillside and low-lying home sites as a result of the heavy rains, leaving visible evidence of what and how much needs to be done for drainage and erosion control. Most of the damage can readily be repaired and future damage prevented by the home gardener himself. And many of us will properly repair the planting damage, but forego major preventive measures with the philosophic attitude that once in several decades is too infrequent to cause us to panic. Wise home-owners will look at the results of the rains and try to picture the effects of double or more rain—as can be expected at least once in each of our lifetimes—and act accordingly.

General garden clean-up isn't glamorous but certainly is necessary, and this is the best time to get it out of the way. Possibly the greatest benefit is realized in eliminating the harboring places for insects, diseases, fungi, snails and slugs. The annual clean-up should include those odds and ends of pruning and cutting back, renewal of mulches where needed, massive treatment for ants and slugs and snails. Rip out that experimental shrub that's never done well and plant a replacement. Remove weeds and trash both for neatness and to ease maintenance through the coming year, filling in holes and cutting drain channels as needed, and so forth. This is also the logical point at which to rejuvenate annual and perennial flower beds with quantities of digested sewage sludge, steer, soil conditioner, shredded fir-bark, bonemeal and fertilizer.

California native plants (and others native to areas of similar climates) are best set out during the rainy season. Frequent irrigation necessary to establish these plants is often fatal during the warm, dry season, but natives are accustomed to our winter rains and take hold quickly and reliably if planted now. This is also a good time to set out citrus and other sub-tropical fruit trees and ornamentals in that the sun is getting warmer and by the time they've recovered from transplant shock the full benefit of the spring surge of growth will be realized.

Also, looking to the future, this is the logical time to plant ground covers on any banks or slopes that are eroding badly this rainy season—most covers require a full season to fill in to prevent erosion next year.

Tropicals and subtropicals often show their resentment at our cold winter nights at this time by yellowing and dropping leaves, shy bloom and generally discouraged appearances. These symptoms can largely be avoided by following a few simple rules. The basic problem is *soil temperature* rather than the cold air—tropicals just aren't adapted to cold soil and the result is that they fall prey to root fungi that work in cold, moist soils, and the remaining roots are functioning at a fraction of their normal efficiency. To help the situation:—Keep sun-loving tropicals such as citrus, bougainvillea and hibiscus definitely on the dry side through the winter months (in normal years relying only on winter rains for irrigation). The principle is that soil on the dry side will be as much as 20 to 25 degrees warmer than moist soil. Remove all mulches at the base of these plants, allowing the soil to soak up as much warmth as possible from the sun. And *over-feed* with bloodmeal or chemical fertilizers during the cold soil periods in order to help the seasonally inefficient root system do its job.

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Bromeliads

by Mrs. Cleoves Hardin

President, San Diego Bromeliad Society

AECHMEA pronounced eek-mea is the largest genus of the subfamily Bromelioideae of the Bromeliaceae. In Aechmea, we find the greatest range of type and species of any genera in this group. They will be found growing on the ground, on rocks and in trees. Many species of the Aechmeas make the best plants for growing in the house or on the patio. If one has a shade house or a greenhouse, no other plant can be more rewarding.

Aechmeas can be found growing in full sunlight as well as the deepest shade. They run from xerophytes to epiphytes and some can be xerophytic epipytes. Many of the hybrid ones of today are terrestrial.

Aechmeas are probably the most popular genera of the Bromeliads for the beginners. They have been in cultivation for a very long time and are the best known in the nurseries and at the florists. Most all of the species produce attractive flower followed by baccate colorful berries which last for a considerable time. The Aechmea really gives two fold for its price in so far as the length of time from the start of the flower forming to the drying up of the fruit may be an elapse of three to four months.

Aechmeas most popular in Southern California for planting out of doors number a dozen or more. If one is a succulent gardener and wants something in the Bromeliads to plant in the Agave or Aloe garden, there are several large-growing spiny leaved ones to consider.

A. distichantha var. distichantha is a large plant up to three feet across with growing habits very much like an agave. The stiff gray-green leaves taper to a sharp point with sharp recurved spines. The flower head is open with purplish blue flowers standing tall above the plant. The flowers are long lasting and eventually set berries or fruit. *A. angustifolia* is a sturdy semi-tubular plant from the Colombia, Peru and Brazil area. It grows to 18 inches or taller and produces a tall erect flower spike with red bracts and yellow flowers, followed by a dense cluster of white berries that lasts for months and eventually turning blue before drying up. The plant is an attractive grey green with teethed margined leaves.

For an entirely different look, try *A. Mexicana*. The origin gives it its name. *A. Mexicana* is a large rosette of broad leather-like leaves green but turning a beautiful rosy red in the sun. It has a large flower spike with small lilac to red petaled flowers growing in a large panicle later setting on a huge head of white berries.

Perhaps you have an area where you would like to hang a mounted plant. *A. recurvata var. benrathii* is a small type. When the plant matures it takes on an unusual shape and color. The center is red when it is coming into flower and the rose colored flowers show up beautifully. This plant can be placed in a sunny spot and it thrives with a light watering when the weather is hot.

Another Aechmea that can be mounted is *A. orlandiana*. It is a beautiful shaped plant with vivid markings. If grown in bright light, the wavy bands are almost black, sometimes so close together that it gives the appearance of a black ceramic vase. In shade, the bands are more narrow sometimes showing maroon splashes or cream colored dashes on a light green background. If you want a different look just move it around. The flower head is very compact with scarlet bracts and yellow flower petals.

If one is interested in a variegated leaf, particularly in a large plant *A. caudata variegata* is a show piece. The plant grows about five feet tall, vase-shaped and in the sun stripes in cream and pink may be seen on a medium green background. The flower stem stands tall above the leaves and is yellow with red bracts. *A. fasciata var. purpurea* is another variegated one. It is green with overtones of purple striped with white when grown in bright light. It is smaller, more vase-shaped than *A. fasciata* but has the spectacular flower head of *A. fasciata*.

Finally in the shade varieties of Aechmea, one sees many lovely shades of copper, maroon, wine, rose and mahogany combined with green to produce plants that look as if they have been hand polished. A beautiful black wine all over plant is A. Hummel's *EBONY GLOW*. Words cannot describe the color of this long-leaved beauty. An unusual one *A. Weilbachii var. Leodiensis* that is almost an orange-copper when grown in dark shade. The flower stem is tall above the plant, the branching inflorescence is a cluster of red-berry-like fruit tipped with the lavender of the flower petal. For a lovely rosette plant, *A. Minitata var. discolor,* powdery rose wine underneath the leaf and a shiny apple green on top is hard to beat. The flower stem is erect with red berries tipped with blue petals. This one can stand more cold than most.

The list can go on and on, but seeing is believing. One would have to be an artist of words to do justice to this beautiful family.

Since all of these are the "tank" type remember to supply your plants with plenty of good water, fertilize occasionally and keep the drainage good. Most of these plants offset well and will fill a pot in just a few years. It is not necessary to increase the pot size each year, but be sure the potting medium has not broken down to impede drainage.

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Roses

by John G. Farleigh

San Diego Rose Society

THE local gardeners are jubilant over the abundant winter rains. Besides leaching out the salts which have been building up over the past few dry years, the entire garden has received a deep-down soaking which should carry us into the spring crop of bloom. Even the rose bushes which have been all but abandoned by their owners are making a strong come-back and will deliver a bumper crop of bloom in spite of long neglect.

Nearly every block has a few struggling roses that appear to have been planted and forgotten; that are overgrown with weeds and grass and have never known a pruning shears. To the owners of these gardens, who have written off their roses as being too difficult, perplexing or not worth the effort, we would plead another chance for both the rose and the gardener.

To be perfectly candid, a rose does require regular care. When properly selected, planted and cared for, they will reward you with bloom most of the year. So, for the sake of discussion, let's assume that we have attracted some disheartened rose fanciers.

Let's get that rose bed back into shape by sprucing things up. Clean out the grass and weeds from around the plants and create a basin for watering. And while you are about it, get the pruning shears and cut out all the dead canes and twiggy growth. With this hard work done, let's go back and review some of the fundamentals.

More roses fail through lack of water than any other single cause. A fast splashing in their general vicinity just won't satisfy them. They need a slow soaking about once a week during the growing season.

Of course, all growing plants need food. A good bloom producer deserves to be fed at least every six weeks. There are many brands of rose food available at the local nursery. A liquid fish-base fertilizer has been recommended by San Diego Rosarians. Whatever you feed, follow the directions on the label.

I can guess the next question. When do we get to the mildew? Well friends, you've got me there. Mildew, like the common cold, has never been completely conquered—but don't despair, we have learned to control it by spraying regularly. *Acti-Dione PM* has been very effective in our garden. You can find this and quite an array of preparations for every mite, fungus and insect known to favor roses at your local nursery. If you do not wish to invest in sprays and spray equipment there are some "home remedies" that work well for some rosarians. Mildew and aphids can be controlled if the plants are washed off each morning with a strong spray of fresh water, especially the under sides of the leaves. Soap suds also has some followers who swear by its effectiveness. If you have but a few roses these remedies may serve the purpose.

If after this year's good care program, your roses still haven't bloomed —you are still plagued with bugs and mildew—throw them out! You wouldn't put up with a troublesome car or appliance, would you? Some roses just won't grow well in your area—a few with top national ratings are failures in San Diego. Find out what varieties do well in this region from the local Rose Society; some are mildew and disease resistant, others have the fragrance or robust growth habits you want.

With all the old reliables and new exciting varieties being introduced each year there's a rose that is "just right" for that favorite spot in your garden.

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Orchids

by Byron H. Geer

San Diego County Orchid Society

THE Cymbidium season is in full swing, and all you wise people who gave them the care that they wanted last summer are enjoying the blooms now. I've said before that what you do to your plants during the spring and summer months has everything to do with whether or not you have blossom in mid-winter. A critical look at your plants as they are at present and, in retrospect, your cultural practices for the past season, will bear me out. Give yourself a pat on the back if the majority of your plants are showing long, loaded spikes. And have someone else give you a good kick if they aren't.

For the next few months be sure that they have an abundant supply of food and water. Keep up the high phosphorus if they are in bloom or spike, switch back to high nitrogen if they are not. Watch the watering with the recent and anticipated rains in mind. They want to be moist at all times, but Cymbidiums react even as you and I at the prospect of continually cold, wet feet. And regardless of how much water you may think is desirable, always do your watering early enough in the day so that the foliage is completely dry by nightfall. If you don't, you stand a good chance of ending up with damped-off growths and spikes.

Most of the insect pests are fairly quiet this time of year, but keep a wary eye out for Aphids which may appear overnight on your prized bloom spikes. If they do show up, use a Malathion in powder (dry) form to control them. The liquid sprays are fine, and give good control, but they may cause irregular spotting in the flowers. Best to play it safe and stick to the powders.

Immediately after blooming is the preferred time to repot Cymbidiums, and the earlier the better. If the bulbs are out to the edge of the container or the compost is broken down badly, the plant should be put into new material. By repotting early you give the new growths the benefit of fresh compost plus adequate growing room. Your plant will be well-rooted with fat, healthy bulbs by the end of summer, which means good bloom for next year. Potting compost should be fir bark and redwood chips or shavings in about fifty-fifty proportions. A good nursery has the materials you need, or, if you don't want to tackle the job yourself, will retub for you at a nominal fee.

The big news in Orchids for March and April is of the annual San Diego County Orchid Society Show to be held in the Conference Building, Balboa Park, and the Fifth World Orchid Conference convening in the Long Beach Arena. March 25 to 27, our own local people display their best for the twentieth consecutive year. If you love Orchids, don't miss it. And if you would like to see Orchids from all over the world make a calendar note to get to Long Beach between April 14-17. This is an international show, and will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the rarest and most exotic of the Orchids in cultivation today. See page 4 of this issue.

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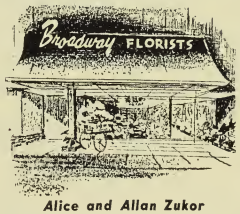

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Dahlias

by Larry Sisk

San Diego County Dahlia Society

THIS is a busy and interesting time for the dahlia hobbyist. First, it's catalog time. A postal card to each of the dahlia specialists on the hobbyist's list or advertising in the garden magazines will bring the current listings and descriptions. Whether the gardener plans to purchase by mail or not, catalogs are essential to know what varieties are current, and at what prices.

Standard seed catalogs usually have a section devoted to dahlia roots, and although those offered usually are the older varieties they are reliable, and reasonably priced. By the first of March or so the nurseries also will be offering roots of standard varieties.

It also is swap time at the dahlia society, and in addition to providing an opportunity for obtaining choice varieties, these events give the average gardener a chance to learn what varieties do well in the area and to gather helpful culture information.

In planning to grow dahlias there are three methods of propagation: slips or cuttings, seed, and tubers (roots).

The cheapest way to grow dahlias is from cuttings, and now is the time. Tubers from which cuttings are to be taken should be taken out of storage immediately—or obtained from a supplier or from friends.

Moisture and warmth will start the sprouting process. A satisfactory method is to place the roots on a bed of damp sand, in a flat or box. Vermiculite or peat moss may be used, but they retain moisture and may be inclined to stay too wet. The bed should be kept moist, not wet.

The crown or end of the root where the sprout will appear should not be covered; again because of danger of too much moisture. Clumps that were not divided in the fall may be partly buried, with the crowns left free.

The flat or container should be placed where as much even warmth as possible can be maintained. A dark corner or area remote from direct light is preferred. A temperature of from 55 to 75 degrees will start the sprouts quickly.

When the sprouts begin to leaf out move the flat to a warm, bright location. Keeping the flat in the dark makes the cuttings too leggy.

When the litle plant is two to four inches high it is ready. Use a sharp knife or razor blade, cutting between the bottom node and the tuber. Trim the cutting to leave only the top two or four leaves, and if the stem below the bottom node is long, make a square cut about an eighth of an inch below the node. (After each cutting, two new sprouts will appear, and may be slipped; then four, then eight, etc.)

Now the cutting is ready for inserting in clean wet sand, burying the bottom node about an inch. Most growers use a chemical rooting powder, dipping in the node before placing in the sand. Identify varieties with plant labels stuck in the sand as the cuttings are placed. When all cuttings are in the sand, sprinkle lightly to settle the node firmly. Keep the sand moist, but not wet, and keep the cuttings in a warm, light location. Temperature of 55 to 75 is best.

In four to six weeks the cuttings will show growth and will have developed a root system so they may be transferred to four-inch pots filled with loamy soil. In another two to four weeks they will be ready for planting when desired. The plants need the same kind of care given other potted plants.

Dahlia seed may be planted from March 1 on. As dahlias do not reproduce their kind from seed, each plant grown from seed will be a new variety. The seed may be obtained from specialists or hobby growers; those available in seed racks at the store are bedding plants and are not recommended for any use other than for borders and beds.

Use the same system for dahlia seed as for others: Plant in flats of sand, vermiculite, or other planting medium, firmed and wet thoroughly; place the seed carefully about two to three inches apart, and cover with about a quarter inch of the planting medium. Spray lightly to complete the moistening job. Place dark paper over the flat, and if possible cover the paper with glass. After two or three days remove the glass and paper.

When the seedlings develop two to four leaves, lift easily and plant in four-inch pots. After two to six weeks they will be ready to plant out.

Dahlia tubers may be planted satisfactorily from March 15 on, but they do better if planted after the soil begins to warm from mid-April to mid-May.

For showing at the county fair, dahlia tubers should be planted by mid-March; seedlings and plants from cuttings may be planted two to four weeks later and they will bloom about the same time.

CALIFORNIA GERANIUMS

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Irises

by James E. Watkins

President, San Diego-Imperial
Counties Iris Society

BLOOM season is now only a matter of short months away, so now is the time to give your irises some last special attention to insure their best behavior when it's time to put forth those bloom stalks. It need not be a great deal of work for you if you've kept their beds free of weeds, as it's the iris you want to help and not the weed next door.

Early in February you should fertilize with a low-nitrogen complete fertilizer, something like a 5-10-10 formula. Some growers prefer January feeding, but it's not too late if you proceed early in the month. You can broadcast the fertilizer, cultivate between the clumps or rows, then water in well. With it you can incorporate trace elements to good advantage—not over a teaspoonful to a clump—and irises respond to this like many other plants in an area where the iron and zinc are often depleted.

Now is the growing time and the plants need plenty of moisture. Forget those old-time axioms about watering irises sparingly. They enjoy plentiful moisture if your drainage is adequate. The best way to water is by slow, deep irrigation where possible, but most of us have to put up with overhead sprinkling.

If you have arilbreds you will want to feed them more than the tall bearded, and they are especially receptive to foliar feeding and to trace elements. All irises will appreciate a side dressing now of dairy manure, but especially the arilbreds—of course keeping it away from contact with the rhizomes. Agricultural gypsum should be spread within the arilbred clumps now also.

This is the time also to watch for pests. Leaf spot is easier to prevent than to cure, and it would be a good time to give all plants a good spraying with a fungicide containing **zineb.** Be sure to repeat the spray treatment after an interval of a week to ten days, and then again later on if leaf spot begins to show. The life cycle of the fungus causing leaf spot is such that it is necessary to repeat the spraying not later than ten days after. If leaf spot already has a good start in the garden, cut short the worst leaves but do not cut all leaves back on a plant. Burn such leaves, never compost them.

Aphids attack irises and are especially attracted to and detrimental to arilbreds. The most prevalent type is the so-called tulip aphis. The first control for aphids is to get rid of any ants with chlordane or dieldrin. There are many aphis sprays on the market, but of late the best results are reported with the systemic type, since the poison travels through the plant and kills in areas the spray itself may have missed, and the effects last longer. Be sure to follow rigorously the directions on the package. Such sprays can be dangerous when not used correctly.

If you have noticed how quickly drops of water run off iris leaves you will realize the necessity of adding a spreader to any spray, whether it be for fertilizing or for pest control. You will find specialized spreaders at certain nurseries, but you can also use a teaspoonful of a mild liquid detergent to a couple of gallons of spray material.

Some spray materials can be mixed together, and I like to add a small amount of liquid fertilizer to the **zineb** spray. Usually the labels on sprays will state whether they are compatible with other materials. Where you can combine foliar feeding and pest control you save the separate physical work, and that time saved can help a lot in this season when you probably have other plants in the garden wanting attention, too.

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Excellent results have been reported with a foliar feeding of liquid potash about six weeks before bloom time, or about the middle of March. I have not yet tried this, but I have been told it sometimes makes enormous differences in intensification of color.

At the same time you fertilize your bearded irises, don't forget to feed the spurias as well. Bulbous irises should have a shot of superphosphate, and Louisiana irises some acid fertilizer, the type you use on your camellias or azaleas.

If all this sounds like a lot of work just realize that many of your other plants can use exactly the same treatment at this time, and you can work them all at the same time. Your irises would probably perform nicely without doing any of these things, as they will fend for themselves better than most plants, but the extra attention pays dividends in size of bloom, in color, in promotion of increase, and certainly in the production of championship stalks for those shows coming up in just a few months.

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Fuchsias

by Morrison W. Doty

San Diego Fuchsia Society

FOLLOWING an unusually wet winter in Southern California this February we find all plants, even the trees, grown far beyond their usual new greenness. The deep watering, leeching out the injurious minerals that affect both our soil and commercial water, has helped a lot. Many gardeners, new to this area, are unaware that we must do this deep watering ourselves fairly often, instead of waiting for rains that seldom come often enough to prevent the accumulation of salts and alkali in the soil. So much soft rainwater may show in our fuchsias this Spring as lush lovely new growth. This is especially true where Fall, or dormant early pruning was done, but may increase the risk of frost kill, with our present erratic weather tendencies.

Considering this, and our cold late Springs of the past year or two, it is safer not to encourage heavy growth by very early feeding. However, they should be checked for sufficient moisture every few days, especially if grown in containers. Wet drippy heavy fogs at night, or even light rains often lead the new grower to expect moisture around the roots of container plants, while instead sunny days and warm winds are drying them out dangerously.

These sunny warm days also often lure the fuchsia fancier into pruning before all danger of killing frost is past. Despite the claims of less dieback and frost damage in Fall pruning as the sap is going down, more people still prune in Spring. Fuchsia pruning should be safe from frost by mid-February, except in coldest county areas. Since all your fine bloom comes only on new growth, pruning is quite essential, and should be carefully studied for best possible results.

Keep in mind always the type of fuchsia and how and where it is to be used in your garden; Bush (erect or trailing, high or low, for border, front or background), Basket (full or low trailing); tree; or espalier. Don't be afraid to cut new growth back each year to within 3 or 4 leaf nodes of the proper outline for its type. Remove straggly, crossing or weak old growth, and trim bush plants to proper height for their place and purpose in the garden. Trim, retie, and keep within the wall pattern, your espaliered plants. Tree types must be shorn to shape, with trunk buds rubbed off to discourage bushing, and basket fuchsias may be cut back almost to the edge of the container. But it is always best to leave a little foliage to provide needed vitality. After pruning, proper pinching back of tips as they grow, will keep them in shape, and prevent heavy blooming until the plant has grown sturdy.

While pruning, select cuttings for propagating new stock. With sharp shears cut from new tip growth, pieces not over 3 or 4 inches long of your most vigorous plants, and press the cut end down firmly past 1 or 2 leaf nodes into a flat of moist sharp sand. The cuttings may be dipped in a plant hormone first and leaf mold can be added to the sand. Placed in a warm, protected nook with filtered sunshine, the cuttings should be about ready to put into little pots in three weeks, without any bottom heat.

Fuchsias are so adaptable to most good plant foods, that an ordinary mixture of one-third each of leaf mold, sandy loam and steer manure, will grow them about as well as expensive commercial mixtures. To promote sturdy green growth before blooming, a formula high in nitrogen is advised for fertilizing, with a decrease of nitrogen and an increase of phosphorus later for heavy blooming. Every 2 or 3 weeks through the summer a feeding of good fish emulsion base fertilizer is recommended. No plant in the garden responds more beautifully to loving care, yet is less demanding than our exotic little rain-forest flower, the fuchsia.

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FISHHOOK CACTUS

Fifth in a Series of Articles on the Native Cacti of San Diego County

by R. Mitchel Beauchamp

Photo by Mitchel Beauchamp

The Fishhook Cactus, *Mammillaria dioica,* is a native cacti for which San Diego County is the northern limit of its distribution. The range of *M. dioica* extends from Cape San Lucas, the most southern tip of Baja California, northward along the west coast to our county. The northern limit in the county is in the vicinity of Del Mar. The deepest inland the cactus occurs is recorded at Cowles Mountain. The form which grows in the desert is considered distinct enough to be treated as a variety. *M. dioica* var. *incerta* is a more robust plant than its coastal cousin. The famous cactus monographers, Britton and Rose, noted that in February, 1922 Mr. C. R. Orcutt sent them a plant from Mason Valley which was the largest they had ever seen. It was more than 33cm. long, 10cm. in diameter and weighed 3 lbs. 13 oz. The more common *M. dioica* of the coast does not attain the dimensions of its desert descendant. Mature plants may vary in size from two to eight inches in height.

A characteristic aspect of the genus Mammillaria is its aerole. The evolution of the cacti toward a more compact structure in order to survive the xerophytic climates of the western hemisphere has lead to the formation of the aerole. On most plants the process of producing leaves, branches and flowers is assumed by the different types of buds of the plant. In the cacti the aerole is the center of growth of these parts. Because of the modification of the cacti the straight and hooked spines of the plant are actually modified or evolved leaves.

Mammillaria have two unusual features that distinguish them from the other members of the cactus family. One of these is that the aeroles of the Mammillaria have taken the form of nipples. The Latin word for this type of structure is mammilla; hence the name, Mammillaria. The other feature is that the stems, flowers and fruit do not emerge from the aerole as is usually the case. Instead they emerge from between the nipples or more precisely, tubercles, and in so doing burst the epidermis of the plant. This seems to violate the purpose of the aerole but by this action the plant is less dependent upon this structure and in some unknown way may benefit from this independence.

The fruit appears a short time after the flowers are spent. They protrude from the plant body in the shape of small, red balls or clubs. The flowers begin to appear in March near the top of the plant in a complete circle. When in bloom the cream colored flowers with their purple midrib on each petal gives the effect of a "halo." The fruit appears in June and also encircles the cactus with a red ring. The combination of flowers and fruit gives the plant an exposition of color from March to the middle of summer.

Those interested in seeing *M. dioica* in its natural setting will find it abundant wherever it occurs. The nature trail of Cabrillo National Monument is quite a worthwhile route for easy access to most of the plants that grow on the Point. Another area for viewing is located in Telegraph Canyon which is about three miles east of Chula Vista. The plants are located on the south-facing slope and are now being threatened by the approaching wave of tract homes.

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ORIGIN OF THE TERM "GREEN THUMB"

Although the term seems to be in general use, information is scanty as to its origin. Maurice Mullay, of Columbus, Ohio, has come up with the most lucid explanation to date. He says, "Currently the term, 'Green fingers' is in wider usage in England and one tart English expatriate described 'Green thumb' as an American vulgarization. However, Chaucer, in his Canterbury Tales, attributes a 'thombe of gold' to the color of their thumbs. Probably the soundest hypothesis for the term's origin is given by the manager of a Boston Horticultural House, who says that his Scottish gardener father used to tell him that a green thumb stained from the algae on the green house flower pots was the trademark of a gardener. This is consistent with the oldest and by far the most charming of all legends about the origin of 'green thumb.' "

The story goes:

In the olden days there once lived in Italy a monk named Fra Antonio. One of his important duties was the care of the cloister garden. So successful was he in the growing of herbs, fruit trees, flowers, and other plants that he became the wonder, and almost envy, of all of his brothers. When asked the secret of his success as a gardener, he always shrugged his shoulders and replied, "I'm sure I do not know, except that I love the plants."

One day he was working in his garden when two of the monks approached from behind his back. When he finally turned and saw them, the senior monk smiled and said, "I know why Fra Antonio can make plants grow so well. See, he has a green thumb."

Fra Antonio looked down at his hands and sure enough, his right thumb was green from the plants that he had been handling. From that day to this, all good gardeners have been said to have a "green thumb."

Plantings From Containers to Clay Soils

By Dara Emery

Establishing container material of native California plants in clay soils frequently presents difficult problems. These soils, rock hard when dry and gummy when wet, are very different from the sandy mix used in gallon cans or other containers. Plants, both native and non-native, which are healthy specimens in containers may become stunted or die for no apparent reason when planted in local gardens.

If the clay soil removed from the planting hole is replaced entirely by sandy loam, the surrounding clay tends to act as a container through which the roots of the new plant do not penetrate. The plant then becomes root-bound. Also, since water seeps very slowly through clay soil, but readily into the sandy mix of the container or planting hole, heavy rains or heavy watering may cause excess water to accumulate around the roots of the new plant. This may cause root rot which severely checks the growth of the plant.

To avoid such problems, a large planting hole, about twice the size of the root ball, should be dug and the new plant set out in a mixture of the clay soil removed from the hole and one-fourth to one-third compost or peat moss. This mixture gives somewhat better drainage and aeration than the garden clay and provides a transition zone through which the developing roots can grow into the garden soil. This mixture will also prevent excess water from accumulating around the former root ball.

Native plants such as many species of Ceanothus and Manzanita, which are marginal in clay soils to begin with, and Lemonade Berry and Sugar Bush respond well to this treatment. These plants when set out in late fall or winter, should be watered when planted and not allowed to dry out during the next few months. In the dry periods of the year one good watering a month should be sufficient in clay soils. Non-native nursery material can also be established in clay soils using this method.

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SAN DIEGUITO GARDEN CLUB
Third Wednesday, Seacoast Savings Building, Encinitas, 10 a.m.
Pres.: Mrs. Waldo Vogt 755-4772
773 Barbara Ave., Solana Beach 92075

SANTA MARIA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
Second Monday, Ramona Women's Club House, 5th and Main, 9:30 a.m.
Pres.: Mrs. William Robinson 789-1987
Third & H Sts., Ramona 92065

SWEETWATER JUNIOR GARDEN CLUB
First Monday, 7:30 p.m. Meets at home of Temporary President
Temp. Pres.: Cleoves Hardin 469-3038
9195 Harness Rd., Spring Valley 92077

VISTA GARDEN CLUB
First Friday, Vista Rec. Center, 7:00 p.m.
Pres.: Mrs. W. L. Larsen 726-3622
320 Mar Vista Dr., Vista 92083

VISTA MESA GARDEN CLUB
Second Tuesday, 2 p.m. Family Association Center
Pres.: Mrs. Clara Haskins 465-0910
2352 El Prado, Lemon Grove 92045

A SPRINGTIME PARADISE . . .

Camellia Show

PRESENTED BY THE SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY

CONFERENCE HALL — BALBOA PARK

FEBRUARY 12 AND 13

ADMISSION FIFTY CENTS

HOURS:

Saturday
2-10 P.M.

Sunday
10 A.M. - 6 P.M.